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I N D E X

<u>Witnesses:</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Cross</u>	<u>Re- direct</u>	<u>Re- cross</u>	<u>By Examiner</u>
None.					

E X H I B I T S

<u>Number</u>	<u>For Identification</u>	<u>In Evidence</u>
None.		

1 JUDGE HILLIARD: On behalf of the Illinois
2 Commerce Commission I call Docket 08-0648, Maurice
3 Perkins, dash, Inner City Youth & Adult Foundation
4 versus Peoples Gas.
5 Can the parties identify themselves.
6 Mr. Perkins, give your name and
7 address.
8 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Maurice Perkins, 4500
9 South Michigan Avenue, president of the Inner City
10 Youth & Adult Foundation.
11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Mark L. Goldstein for the
12 Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company, 3019 Province
13 Circle, Mundelein, Illinois 60060. My telephone
14 number is (847) 949-1340. And I have with me today
15 Soledad Barragan of Peoples Gas.
16 JUDGE HILLIARD: All right. Mr. Perkins,
17 you're the complainant. It's your time to go ahead
18 here.
19 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Your Honor, I'm
20 interested in my refund. When Peoples Gas settled
21 with the City of Chicago and the Attorney General,
22 Lisa Madigan, there was supposed to be refunds. I

1 never received one. I'm looking for my refund.

2 And I'm looking at the going-ons and
3 State Government and the Governor's problems and all
4 these people's problems and nobody's taking care of
5 the problems of the people. I'm waiting on my refund
6 from Peoples Gas as agreement to the settlement that
7 was reached by the City of Chicago and the Attorney
8 General's Office. I never got my refund.

9 JUDGE HILLIARD: Do you have any idea how much
10 the refund should be?

11 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I think it should be --
12 I'd like to get 50,000 because I've been going
13 through this for the last 15 -- look, these people
14 worked with Enron, inflated gas prices, bought it at
15 a higher rate and then they came down in the ghetto
16 and put it on people with the lowest income in the
17 City of Chicago.

18 Your Honor, this is not a joke. Look
19 at this right here. Look. Do you see these
20 children? Them black babies, they can't take their
21 coats off in they houses. They can't take their
22 coats off in they houses, your Honor. In the richest

1 country in the world they can't take their coats off
2 in they houses.

3 Also, my children -- then they expect
4 the black man to do something about it and they can't
5 take their coats off in they houses because of these
6 inflated prices. They laws.

7 Enron is not doing business anywhere
8 in the country but here with them. They inflated
9 those prices. I'm looking for my refund.

10 I just left the U.S. House of
11 Representatives talking to Representative Joe Barden,
12 the ranking member of the Energy Committee. I told
13 him I didn't think my antitrust claims would be
14 settled here and I asked him to intervene.

15 See, this is a joke to them. You
16 know, they got the incomes, they go home to heated
17 houses; but black babies in this city sleep in their
18 coats, and they supposed to go to school and get an
19 education? It's bigger than me. I'm old and pointed
20 toward the grave. It don't matter to me, see; but
21 what they're doing is wrong. They're hurting my
22 community. They're hurting my kids, man. That's a

1 black baby that can't take off her coat in her house,
2 and she's supposed to go to school and get her
3 education? It's bigger than that, your Honor.

4 And they're wrong and I'm right. And
5 I'm going to tell Pat Quinn, who I worked with with
6 CUB years ago advocating, Come over here and finish
7 your business. I know who Lula Ford is. I know they
8 all go to lunch. It's just one big happy party.

9 I've lost thousands of dollars in
10 pipes in my building. My electric bill is triple.
11 So, you know, your Honor, I'm looking for justice. I
12 may sound simple to you, but I'm looking for justice.

13 Can't take their coats off in they
14 houses in America. Supposed to get an education, be
15 somebody. Freezing in their house, can't cook.
16 Bigger than me, your Honor.

17 I'm looking for my refund that they
18 said we had coming. I've been there 15 years under
19 this bondage and deceptive practices. I've been
20 there 15 years. 50,000 -- shit, they want 15, 1200,
21 1800, whatever number they choose from me every
22 month. I'm scared to cut it back on because the

1 first thing they're going to do is they're going to
2 overcharge me and all this stuff I did this winter is
3 going to be for nil. See, they owe me. I'm a
4 victim, not them.

5 JUDGE HILLIARD: How much money is at issue
6 here?

7 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: They say I owe them --
8 gave them a thousand dollars -- now check this out,
9 your Honor, here you go: First, they say I owe them
10 \$8,000. I tell them to give me a corrected bill.
11 They drop the bill to \$6,000. They charge me \$150
12 every month for late payments. They got ten
13 different taxes on the doggone bill, gas uses, gas
14 charge, meter service, this or that. You know, I
15 mean, Jesus Christ, this is three-card monte all the
16 way.

17 Now, I brought -- they owe me, your
18 Honor. They owe me. Now, they say now that I owe
19 them -- after giving them a thousand dollars, they'll
20 drop the bill from 8,000 to 5800. They dropped that
21 because you know what they had? They had, We demand
22 a thousand dollars deposit; we demand this; we demand

1 that. I mean, where is my rights as an American
2 citizen? Where do I go to get my rights at?

3 They already in violation of the
4 antitrust laws of this country being a monopoly and
5 they take full advantage of that. I come here for
6 justice, man. I made \$32,000 last year. I can't
7 give them half of that. You know, how do I eat?

8 Now they're saying that I owe them 58.
9 I gave them a thousand. It should have went to 48,
10 but then I got me another 300 on late charges. So I
11 guess that boots it back up to 51. It's just -- it's
12 a game.

13 They -- I'm looking for a refund,
14 which after the settlement -- not a credit. Refund.
15 Language. Definition. Refund. Not a credit. And I
16 want it to be commensurate with the way they've been
17 charging me. This country is in the tubes. I'm in
18 foreclosure fighting everything over there and I've
19 got to come here and do this? And they've been found
20 guilty and wrong. You know, I'm just looking for
21 some justice.

22 I just got off a plane last night

1 leaving Capitol Hill with my last few dollars. I'm
2 looking for justice. And I asked the Chairman of the
3 Energy Commission, Please, come here and intervene
4 for black babies so they wouldn't have to go to bed
5 with their coats on. That's what they doing, going
6 to bed with their coats on because of them.

7 JUDGE HILLIARD: Are there two accounts
8 involved, your personal account and a foundation
9 account, or is there one account?

10 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: It's one account there.
11 We got a rear coach house there in the building that
12 we sometime rent out. That's where the second meter
13 is involved to -- where the people we rent out. We
14 got another not-for-profit back there right now doing
15 some gang intervention work. Sometime we have it
16 rented out six, eight months a year. Sometime -- you
17 know, it's not consistent; but, you know, we got it
18 rented now. And, in fact, we just got another tenant
19 that's probably going to go on record because the
20 other people, they contract ran out, you know, small
21 not-for-profit.

22 They don't even respect my tax exempt

1 status. I'm tax exempt under Illinois Revenue
2 Service Code. You think they tax-exempt me? No,
3 they don't. Not an inch. Not nothing. That's why
4 I'm here, your Honor.

5 And I'm trying to sell that building
6 and I'm trying to get out of that grass. They're
7 doing urban renewal. Once they shut the service off,
8 then they come and lock the building down because the
9 building's dead after that. Takes all the life out
10 of it. They're doing urban renewal. See, so, you
11 know, I'm hurting. I don't want to appear
12 ridiculous, but the pain is real. I'm down there
13 fixing busted pipes because -- you know, one month
14 they send me a bill for 1800. I'm heating
15 4,000 square feet. 1800? Pain, your Honor. Pain.

16 Been mistreated. Want a refund. Want
17 it to be commensurate with the way I've been paying.
18 \$219. Shit, they charge me that in taxes for one
19 month. Something's wrong with this part of it, your
20 Honor, that's all. And if, you know, you give me
21 time, I'm going to have somebody from Capitol Hill
22 intervene in this case.

1 I'm not going to let my children lay
2 out there -- laying like that -- and I call myself an
3 organization and a black man -- and these black
4 babies by the thousands going to bed with their coats
5 on.

6 JUDGE HILLIARD: You know, there are various
7 programs to help people pay their utility bills in
8 the winter. Have you investigated those?

9 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Yeah, I fall under none
10 of that criteria. I fall under none of that
11 criteria. I'm an organization. I'm a
12 not-for-profit. I should be doing better than I'm
13 doing, but I'm not. A lot of people losing their
14 401(k)s. This thing's going down the drain. They
15 modifying loans. Let them modify something. They're
16 modifying loans in the mortgage banking industry.
17 That's the only way it's going to stay afloat. They
18 look like Wall Street over here, man. You give it to
19 them, they give nothing back. I mean, pain.

20 My children, man, are going to bed
21 with their coats on, Judge. Your children ain't
22 going to bed with their coats on. Their children

1 ain't going to bed with their coats on.

2 JUDGE HILLIARD: Do you have children living
3 with you or just...?

4 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I work with ex-offenders
5 and a few of the mothers there do have children. And
6 we are basically a shelter, you know -- and, I mean,
7 it's hard in this country now. They need to wake up,
8 turn on the television or something. You know, they
9 need to roll back some things, your Honor.

10 JUDGE HILLIARD: All right. How many of these
11 people live in your facility?

12 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I got about eight people
13 that live there.

14 JUDGE HILLIARD: Counting yourself?

15 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Yeah, counting me.

16 JUDGE HILLIARD: And do you have any other
17 family members?

18 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Yeah, I got a few family
19 members there.

20 JUDGE HILLIARD: And how many children live
21 there?

22 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Three.

1 JUDGE HILLIARD: And do you know what their
2 ages are approximately?

3 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I think one is 7. The
4 other two I would only be assuming. I know one is 7
5 because I talked to him.

6 JUDGE HILLIARD: Are all eight of the people
7 related to you?

8 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Oh, no. Uh-uh. I work
9 with ex-offenders, guys getting out of prison. I do
10 transitional housing and life management skills, try
11 to teach people how to break their criminal activity,
12 teach them skills to gain entry to the mainstream,
13 jobs and development, things like that. I work with
14 McCormick Place. We do -- some of our people do the
15 setups for the shows and stuff like that. We're
16 not-for-profit, have been.

17 You know, just no consideration -- you
18 know, I'm about done. You know, I'm really trying to
19 throw in the towel; but the point needs to be made of
20 how this hurts and how these kids -- you know, that's
21 the Tribune, man. There they are with their coats
22 on, you know. This is bad. It's bad. And if the

1 Attorney General and the City of Chicago have won
2 this settlement, say I got a refund coming, I'm
3 looking for it.

4 JUDGE HILLIARD: Have you contacted the
5 Attorney General about that?

6 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: No, I look at politics
7 today in the State of Illinois, taxation without
8 representation. Ain't nobody representing nobody no
9 more. This governor here lost his mind, man. He
10 actually lost his mind. And these people down here,
11 Lula Ford, I read the paper when they're having their
12 lunches and things with People Gas executives. I
13 mean, it's really no shame and no credibility
14 nowhere.

15 It's -- I ain't talking to you. Just
16 left Capitol Hill because I'm trying to get this case
17 intervened on so the antitrust laws that I brought to
18 you -- so somebody can look at that. This is a
19 monopoly strangling the life out of the -- a monopoly
20 strangling the life out of the community.

21 I went with -- tried to go with this
22 other energy company, and I wound up paying two

1 bills, theirs and them, at the same time. I had to
2 pay two companies then. Nowhere to go, man; judge,
3 jury and execution.

4 I'm just looking for a righteous
5 refund, and I'm looking to be charged right. And
6 with this governor coming in -- Pat Quinn, still as
7 an advocate as he was when he was at CUB, maybe he
8 and I may be able to get back together and do
9 something here. This is notorious. \$1800 a month
10 for 4,000 square feet?

11 And the people in North Shore and up
12 in Wilmette, they don't pay like that, man. Nicor
13 ain't charging them like that. Just them. Just
14 them. Nicor ain't charging the richest people in
15 this area like that. But the poor, down in the
16 ghetto down there, why we got a bad -- all of this?
17 Because we less educated? Less influential?

18 You know, something needs to happen,
19 your Honor. And you had an opportunity to make
20 something happen. I'm looking for my refund and I'm
21 looking to be charged right. This is what they say
22 about all we had coming. Where is it at.

1 JUDGE HILLIARD: Okay. Do you have anything?

2 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: That's it.

3 JUDGE HILLIARD: Okay.

4 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I brought them this blood
5 money here, but I almost don't want them to turn it
6 on because I know it's going be a race to make all
7 this suffering nil. But I brought them this blood
8 money. That's what it is.

9 JUDGE HILLIARD: You got money with you to
10 settle --

11 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I got \$500 that -- I had
12 to break open a few piggy banks and make a few juice
13 loans and all of that. But he said if I brought
14 \$500... Hey, the white man is leading and the black
15 man is bleeding. Remember that now. White man is
16 leading and the black man is bleeding. I'm bleeding.
17 I'm a victim. I'm a victim.

18 And I'm asking that this be continued
19 till I can get word to Capitol Hill. They told me
20 two weeks they would give me a written reply as to
21 whether they would come and intervene.

22 JUDGE HILLIARD: Okay.

1 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Representative Joe
2 Barden, he's the ranking member of the Energy
3 Committee on Capitol Hill for the Congress of the
4 United States. And I just left his office yesterday
5 at 3:00 o'clock and he said give him two weeks and he
6 would make a decision whether he'd come here and
7 intervene.

8 It's like that -- it's -- Judge, I
9 know that everything is just wham bam thank you
10 ma'am. I understand that. I understand we don't
11 have a right to have faith in our politicians and our
12 regulators anymore as a result of Wall Street and how
13 they've taken people's money like thieves -- just
14 take the American people's -- I looked at my
15 mortgage, what I was paying. I'm paying \$3,000 a
16 month. The company's getting 2800 in interest and
17 I'm putting \$160 on principal. I could never -- they
18 did us in. They did us in. This is a part of that.

19 You know, I mean, I know you guys see
20 each other every day and all that, man; but it's
21 painful. I'm speaking for a community that's laying
22 out there with space heaters catching hold to the

1 curtains and burning 'em up, burning 'em up, trying
2 to survive in this mess.

3 JUDGE HILLIARD: All right. Mr. Perkins has
4 tendered a check. Are you prepared to accept that?

5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes, we are, Judge. As
6 Mr. Perkins stated, if you recall from the last
7 status hearing, we requested a \$2,000 deposit in
8 order to turn his heat on. Since then, Peoples Gas
9 has determined that they would accept \$1500. He's
10 paid 1,000 already. Today he's tendering a check for
11 500 and we will restore service on that basis.

12 I just want to make one brief comment
13 with respect to Mr. Perkins' assertion about the
14 refund. As your Honor will recall, back in April of
15 2006, Peoples Gas was required to make refunds to
16 customers. At that time Mr. Perkins had a large
17 balance owed on his gas account for Inner City Youth.
18 Because of that, that refund, which amounted to
19 \$217.53, was applied to the outstanding balance of
20 his account. In effect, he was given that refund
21 and --

22 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: It's not a refund.

1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: -- and I think that should be
2 the end of that particular issue.

3 I guess the only thing else I would
4 have to say is that since Mr. Perkins is waiting two
5 more weeks to see if someone's going to intervene on
6 his behalf, I think that what your Honor should do is
7 set this matter out four to six weeks from now and
8 let's have a hearing and finish this matter.

9 JUDGE HILLIARD: All right. As I understand
10 the prostrated case, you've made the presentation
11 that you want to make here. And subject to the
12 decision by Mr. Barden's office as to whether or not
13 they want to intervene, that's the entirety of your
14 case; is that correct?

15 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I feel that in this body
16 here that my antitrust claims, which are legitimate,
17 cannot be addressed. A refund is a refund. Credit
18 is a credit. Two separately distinct things. And if
19 a person is to give a refund for past malpractices,
20 it should be commensurate with what I'm paying. I
21 never paid them under a thousand dollars a month.
22 What is -- \$217 for 15 years -- from 2006 to 2009, I

1 never paid them under a thousand dollars a month.
2 That's the taxes on one bill. And I couldn't even
3 get that in a check as a refund? I couldn't even get
4 that.

5 JUDGE HILLIARD: All right. But my question
6 was, are you -- subject to Mr. Barden's office
7 intervening in this case, is your presentation
8 here -- you've said all you want to say; is that
9 right?

10 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Let me say this -- you
11 know, I need to bring some people up in here; but I
12 just don't see -- you know, I just don't see this
13 particular setting able to facilitate, you know,
14 really what it is I'm asking.

15 JUDGE HILLIARD: Okay.

16 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Just like he said, why
17 didn't I call -- you said, Why didn't I call the
18 Attorney General? Why didn't I call the City
19 Corporation Counsel? Those people should be here.
20 And if they sold this thing out, then they should be
21 held accountable, too, your Honor, because what I'm
22 saying is -- we got subpoena power here; right?

1 See, that's --

2 JUDGE HILLIARD: I don't have subpoena power.
3 The Commission has subpoena power. If you want
4 someone subpoenaed you have to serve a motion to have
5 a subpoena issued, and I have to present it to the
6 Commission and the Commission has to determine that
7 it's relevant and material to the issues of your
8 case.

9 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Thank you so much
10 because, see -- you know, I've been all the way back
11 to Pat Quinn when he was with CUB. He held the line.
12 I just hope he stays the advocate that he was for the
13 people. See -- and I will be serving a motion asking
14 that certain people be in the room because they
15 violated the agreement. They have violated the
16 agreement of the settlement. Refund is refund.
17 Credit is credit.

18 And I am done, your Honor.

19 JUDGE HILLIARD: Okay. Well, how about we
20 continue this to April 16th?

21 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Thank you, your Honor.

22 Same time?

1 JUDGE HILLIARD: Let's see if that date's
2 convenient for the Company.

3 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: Okay.

4 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's Thursday, the 16th of
5 April, Judge?

6 JUDGE HILLIARD: Yes.

7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's fine.

8 JUDGE HILLIARD: 10:00 o'clock?

9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: 10:00 o'clock.

10 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: And thank you, your
11 Honor, for allowing me to state my case.

12 JUDGE HILLIARD: You're welcome.

13 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I'll feel less than a man
14 if I don't come to represent these children as a
15 community leader. They suffering. It's just the
16 pain, your Honor. So when --

17 JUDGE HILLIARD: You know, you're correct that
18 the Commission doesn't have any jurisdiction over
19 antitrust claims. So if that's a claim you want to
20 raise, you have to do that in another forum.

21 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: I just got off a plane
22 last night, your Honor, leaving Capitol Hill. I met

1 with the representative because these issues are
2 paramount -- you know, they talk stimulus. Well, we
3 don't want to get our stimulus and then have to give
4 it to them.

5 JUDGE HILLIARD: We will be adjourned then
6 till --

7 MR. MAURICE PERKINS: And thank you for your
8 kindness and courtesy.

9 JUDGE HILLIARD: Sure.

10 Anything further, Mr. Goldstein, that
11 you need to say?

12 MR. GOLDSTEIN: No, I have nothing else, Judge.

13 Since this is Friday already,
14 Ms. Barragan will contact Mr. Perkins and advise him
15 when his service will be restored.

16 JUDGE HILLIARD: Can you give us an idea of
17 when that will happen?

18 MS. SOLEDAD BARRAGAN: It will be next week --
19 early next week.

20 JUDGE HILLIARD: If there's a problem, please
21 let me know because the Commission is always
22 concerned about these service shutoffs and returns.

1 Okay.

2 We'll be adjourned until the 16th.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled

4 matter was continued to

5 April 16, 2009, at 10:00 a.m.)

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